VICTORIA WAY, MELBOURN,

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Assessment Report:
Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenches and Soil Testing

Prepared by

NETWORK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

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Non-Technical Summary

In November 2014 Network Archaeology Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation at Victoria Way, Melbourn, in the county of Cambridgeshire.

Six trenches were opened as part of a pre-planning application process for residential housing. A soil sieving exercise was also employed to test for artefact presence within ploughsoil and subsoils.

The evaluation identified a number of archaeological features (small ditches, gullies, shallow postholes), as well as pedological/geomorphological deposits in association with lithic artefacts, and several potential archaeological features which proved to be natural in origin.

Evidence of a possible prehistoric field system comprising two parallel ditches was identified at the south-west end of the PDA. One ditch contained Bronze Age to Iron Age worked flints, as well as butchered animal bone, possible Bronze Age pottery, and environmental evidence of former agricultural practices. The artefacts hint at domestic activity within/close to the PDA. The ditch also produced Mesolithic to early Neolithic flints, an indicator of earlier prehistoric activity.

In the centre of the PDA, a single piece of Roman pottery and fired clay fragments were found in association with two curvilinear gullies. The latter are possibly indicative of former structures and therefore potential occupation, although one Roman pot sherd does not provide confident dating.

A parallel ditch and gully within the centre of the PDA may also have been the remnants of a former field system, although no dating evidence was forthcoming.

Within the north-east part of the PDA, a 1.2m-thick deposit of colluvium was identified, apparently filling a geological or periglacial feature, and below which was a ‘buried soil’ overlying weathered chalk substrate. The buried soil could represent an early post-periglacial topsoil, environmental evidence from it indicating that it likely supported a short turfed grassland. The lower portion of the colluvium, and the buried soil, both yielded small quantities of Mesolithic to early Neolithic worked flints.

The soil sieving exercise recovered a small quantity of worked flint, with no significant concentrations identified.

The findings as a whole indicate that human activity was taking place within the PDA, possibly as early as the Mesolithic, and during the Bronze and/or Iron Age periods.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Report

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken in advance of development of land at Victoria Way, Melbourn in Cambridgeshire (centred at NGR 538560 243980).

1.2 Project Background

1.2.1 Proposed development and planning history

The evaluation was undertaken in support of a planning application (Ref. S/1225/14/E1) for construction of 65 houses and associated ancillary works.

The evaluation was undertaken in response to a brief issued by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Advisor (CHET, 2014) in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1.2.2 Location, description and natural environment

The Proposed Development Area (PDA) occupies approximately 2.3ha of scrubland to the south of New Road, adjacent to Victoria Way on the southern edge of Melbourn, Cambridgeshire, bounded by existing residential development to the north and east, farmland to the west, and a cemetery to the south (Figure 1). The ground moderately slopes from 40m AOD at the south-west end, to 32m AOD at the north-east end.

The bedrock underlying the PDA is chalk, potentially overlain by thin layers of Quaternary drift deposits, particularly of periglacial head. The natural chalk was identified in all six of the trenches and varied from relatively bright white to an off-white chalk rubble with occasional patches of sandy silt (Plate 5). The calcareous soils are well-drained fine to coarse loams, of the Upton 1 and Swaffham Prior associations in the Soil Survey classification (Soil Survey of England and Wales).

1.3 Archaeological Background

A desk-based assessment of the PDA was carried out prior to the evaluation (The Howlett Consultancy, 2013). This identified no known heritage assets, historic buildings or archaeological remains within the PDA.

Within the wider landscape significant archaeological remains are known, particularly prehistoric funerary monuments, an Anglo Saxon cemetery to the south of the PDA, and a smaller number of other later prehistoric remains to the east.

A geophysical survey (Stratascan, 2013) identified a number of anomalies thought to be either geological in origin or indicative of scattered ferrous objects (Figure 2).

Further details of the archaeological background can be found in Appendix A.

1.4 Aims and objectives

The **primary** purpose of the evaluation was to gather sufficient information:

- to generate a reliable predictive model of the location, extent, date, character, date, condition, and quality of any archaeological remains within the PDA;
- to ascertain their significance, and
- to determine the potential impact of development on any archaeological remains within the PDA.

The purpose of this work is to assist South Cambridgeshire District Council in determining any planning application for the PDA in the context of NPPF.

The **specific** aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- to determine, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be adversely affected by the proposed development;
- to determine the amount of truncation to buried deposits;
- to determine the presence of absence of a palaeosol or 'B' horizon;
- to assess the state of preservation of deposits within any negative features that may be present;
- to generally elucidate site formation processes;
- to define the extent of any areas of made ground and previous ground disturbance which may have destroyed archaeological deposits;
- to engage in a programme of post-excavation archiving, synthesis and study, leading to publication and dissemination of results, and
- to ensure the long-term survival of the information through deposition of a project archive.

1.5 Methods

The trenches were set-out using dGPS survey equipment accurate to 10mm.

Each trench was excavated using a back-acting mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide smooth-bladed ditching bucket operating under the close and constant supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist, and any discovered archaeology was investigated and recorded as per the methodology laid out in the WSI (Network Archaeology, 2014).

For the soil sieving, a total 17 points was selected for investigation. Each sample comprised eight litres of topsoil, and subsoil (where present), from either end of the 30m long trenches. For the longer trenches a third sample was taken from the centre of the trench. Each sample was hand-sieved through a 10mm mesh.

1.6 Resources

The evaluation was carried out by two to three archaeologists over a five day period in November 2014. External monitoring was undertaken by Kasia Gdaniec, the senior archaeologist for Cambridgeshire County Council (Cambridgeshire Archaeology).

2 Factual Results & Interpretation

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the factual results and interpretation of the evaluation. Throughout this section cut features and deposits are referred to by unique context numbers. A convention has been adopted whereby cut features and structures are referenced in bold type, whilst deposits such as fills and layers are referenced in plain type.

Sections 2.2 to 2.7 cover the results of the evaluation, whilst the results of the soil-sieving can be found in section 2.8. The finds are summarised in section 2.9 and the combined results are discussed in section 3. A summary table of contexts can be found in Appendix B.

2.1.1 General stratigraphy

The general stratigraphy identified in all of the trenches is as follows:

- Ploughsoil: 0.25-0.30m, pale grey-brown loam, frequent flint fragments
- Subsoil: 0.05-0.15m, brown-orange silt loam, frequent flint fragments
- Chalk: weathered grey/white bedrock

2.2 Trench 1

2.2.1 Introduction

Trench 1, oriented north-north west to south-south east, was located at the highest, western end of the PDA (Figure 2 and Plate 1)

The general stratigraphy across the majority of the trench was topsoil (108) overlying the natural chalk substrate (119). Subsoil (120) was only visible at the north-north west end of the trench.

The topsoil contained fragments of burnt and worked flint, clay pipe and a single fragment of pottery dating from the 16th to 18th century.

The geophysical survey identified no possible anomalies within the area of this trench.

2.2.2 Archaeological findings

Identified within this trench was a ditch (**105**) with adjacent parallel gully (**117**), a further possible ditch (**111**), a posthole (**109**), and a possible pit or tree-hole (**115**). A further two linear features

were investigated but were found to be a plough scar (**113**), and a feature of periglacial/natural origin (**121**) (Figure 3a).

All of the features were sealed by the topsoil (108) and cut into the natural chalk substrate (119).

Ditch **105** and gully **117** were located close to the centre of the trench (Figure 3a), both oriented east-north east to west-south west. The ditch was 1.8m wide, 0.66m deep, had moderate concave sides with a flat base, and contained two fills (Figure 3b and Plate 7). The primary fill (107) contained a comparatively large amount (40 fragments) of worked flint, mostly dating to the Mesolithic / early Neolithic period, whilst the upper fill (106) contained worked flint mostly from the Bronze Age / Iron Age. Both of the fills also contained fragments of animal bone and burnt flint whilst the upper fill contained a single fragment of early or late Bronze Age pottery. The parallel gully, located immediately north of the ditch and with a similar concave profile, was 0.6m wide and 0.16m deep, and its sole fill (118) produced no finds.

Possible ditch **111**, located within the south east half of the trench, was oriented north east to south west, had irregular concave sides and a flat base (0.6m wide and 0.33m deep) (Plate 8), and its sole fill (112) yielded no finds.

Posthole **109**, also located close to the centre of the trench, was circular in plan with moderate concave sides and a flat base (0.6m long, 0.55m wide and 0.12m deep) (Figure 3c and Plate 9); its sole fill (110) produced no finds.

The remaining feature (**115**), located close to the south-south east end of the trench, was amorphous in plan with an irregular concave profile (1.6m long, 0.65m wide and 0.2m deep) (Plate 10). Its sole fill (116) produced no finds.

2.2.3 Interpretation

The ditch (**105**) most likely represents the remnant of a prehistoric field boundary. Whilst the upper fill contained primarily Bronze Age / Iron Age flints, thereby indicating a Bronze Age date, the large amount of earlier prehistoric flints recovered from the basal fill suggests that a Bronze Age ditch may have truncated an underlying and therefore earlier Mesolithic / early Neolithic spread or feature (Bishop, Appendix D). Environmental samples obtained from the basal fill of the ditch contained cereal grains indicating that agricultural activity was almost certainly taking place within the vicinity of this trench (Fryer, Appendix D). The burnt flints recovered from both fills were

most likely the result of incidental burning within hearths (Bishop, Appendix D) and therefore potentially further proof of human activity taking place within the immediate area.

Although no dating was recovered from the gully (**117**), it ran parallel with ditch **105,** perhaps indicating a degree of contemporaneity and suggesting that both the gully and ditch may have been part of a prehistoric field system.

The edges of the possible ditch (**111**) were heavily truncated by animal disturbance and it was unclear whether this was indeed a ditch of archaeological origin or possibly an animal run such as part of a Badger sett. If it was a ditch it too may have been used as a boundary or drainage feature.

No dating evidence was recovered from the posthole (**109**) and no similar features were identified within this trench. Whilst it presumably had some kind of structural function, it was not possible to ascertain any additional details of its former use.

The remaining feature (**115**) was amorphous in both plan and profile and, although possibly an irregular pit, was most likely a former tree-hole.

2.3 Trench 2

2.3.1 Introduction

This trench, oriented north-north east to south-south west, was located close to the centre of the PDA (Figure 2 and Plate 2), but still on the PDA's higher part.

Within this trench the topsoil (203) directly overlay the natural chalk substrate (204). A small quantity of worked and burnt flint was recovered from the topsoil along with single fragments of clay pipe and 19th century pottery.

The geophysical survey identified no possible anomalies within this area.

2.3.2 Archaeological findings

Only scarring caused by previous ploughing, almost certainly modern, was identified within this trench.

2.4 Trench 3

2.4.1 Introduction

This trench, oriented east to west, was located close to the centre of the PDA (Figure 2 and Plate 3).

The general stratigraphy of this trench was: topsoil (304), overlaying subsoil (311/322), which in turn directly overlay the natural chalk substrate (309). Close to the centre of the trench the subsoil appeared to have become more mixed (321) indicating it may have been disturbed by ploughing.

Both the topsoil and the subsoil contained fragments of animal bone, worked flint and post-medieval tile, with the topsoil also containing single fragments of clay pipe and pottery dating from the 16th to 20th centuries AD. A single sherd of Roman pottery, dated to the 2nd / 3rd century AD was also recovered from the subsoil.

The geophysical survey identified a possible north west to south east oriented linear within the eastern half of the trench (Figure 2).

2.4.2 Archaeological findings

A ditch (**305), two gullies (307** and **312**) and a posthole (**314**) were identified within this trench. In addition, a distinct and compact concentration of flints (318) was observed, about 0.75m across, and sitting between gullies **307** and **312**. The flints appeared to be within a very compact matrix of sandy silt, in association with a linear depression and pair of parallel linear hollows (**316**).

All of the archaeological features and deposits were located within the eastern half of the trench (Figure 4a) and, with the exception of gully **312** were sealed by the subsoil (311/322) and cut the natural substrate (309). Gully **312** also cut the natural substrate but appeared to be sealed by the plough-disturbed subsoil (321).

Ditch **305**, located close to the eastern end of the trench, was oriented broadly north-north west to south-south east with steep concave sides and a flat base (1.34m wide and 0.4m deep) (Figure 4d and Plate 11). This ditch had two fills (306 and 310), neither of which produced any finds, and it appeared to correlate with the linear anomaly recorded by the geophysical survey (Figure 2).

Gullies **307** and **312** were each generally oriented broadly north-west to south east, but both appeared to be slightly curvilinear (Figure 4b and Plate 12). Both had either moderate or shallow

concave sides with flat bases (0.4m wide and 0.12m to 0.14m deep) and both contained single fills (308/313 respectively), neither of which yielded any finds.

Between gullies **307** and **312** was a meandering but generally linear hollow (**316**) oriented broadly north to south with irregular concave profile. Its sole fill (317) produced no finds. This hollow lay adjacent to the compact spread of flints (318). A section excavated across the hollow (**316**) identified a pair of linear channels oriented broadly north to south, both of which had irregular concave profiles. A sample of the flints (139 in total) from the compact silt adjacent to the hollow was recovered, and subsequent assessment identified all of these to be natural in origin (Bishop, Appendix D).

Posthole **314**, located between curvilinear gully **309** and linear hollow **316** and against the southern bulk, appeared circular in plan with steep concave sides, a concave base (0.32m wide and 0.12m deep) (Figure 4c) and contained two fills (315 and 319), neither of which produced any finds.

2.4.3 Interpretation

The ditch (**305**) was most likely the remnant of a former (undated) field boundary.

Gullies **307** and **312** are thought less likely to have been former boundaries. The fact they curved in towards each other and were 6m apart, suggests that they may have been part of the same feature. That is, they may represent the remnants of foundation trenches or drip gullies for a circular or ovoid structure.

The posthole, as with that identified in Trench 1 (**109**), was found in isolation within the trench. Other than that it was presumably in some way connected to something structural, its former function is not known.

The linear hollow and pair of linear channels (**316**), in association with the compact silt and concentration of flints, are unlikely to be of archaeological interest. The channels may be wheel-ruts, indicating the former presence of a trackway at this point. The flints may be a localised natural flint outcrop, perhaps compressed/shattered either by ploughing or by wheeled traffic.

2.5 Trench 4

2.5.1 Trench specifications and overburden

This trench, oriented west-north west to east-south east, was located within the eastern half of the PDA (Figure 2 and Plate 4).

The general stratigraphy of this trench was: topsoil (407), overlying subsoil (408), below which was the natural chalk substrate (409). A small quantity of worked and burnt flint was recovered from the topsoil.

Within the eastern half of the trench the subsoil (408) overlay up to 1.2m of firm mid orange-brown clay silt, a deposit thought to be colluvium (411), below which was the natural chalk substrate (409).

The geophysical survey identified a possible linear anomaly at the north-west end of the trench and an area of magnetic disturbance close to the centre of the trench (Figure 2).

2.5.2 Archaeological findings

The only archaeological cut feature identified within this trench was a ditch (**405**) located close to the centre of the trench and oriented broadly north to south (Figure 5a). This ditch had moderate concave sides with a flat base (2.6m wide and 0.5m deep) (Figure 5b and Plate 13), its sole fill (406) producing no finds. This ditch cut the natural substrate (409) and was sealed by the colluvium (411); it also appeared to correlate with an area of magnetic disturbance identified by the geophysical survey in the centre of the trench (Figure 2).

The other possible linear (410), at the north-west end of the trench, was investigated but is considered to be a band of natural silty sand.

2.5.3 Interpretation

The ditch (**405**) probably represents the remnant of a former field boundary. The fill of this feature was very dry and friable, possibly indicating that it (the fill) had accumulated naturally, as opposed to being the result of deliberate backfilling.

The colluvium (411) appeared to gradually thicken to the east before dropping off fairly steeply in the latter third of the trench, and thereby exposing an east facing shelf in the chalk (Plate 14). The presence of this shelf suggests that the colluvium is filling a large void, possibly a post-glacial feature such as an ice-wedge or a pingo.

2.6 Trench 5

2.6.1 Trench specifications and overburden

This trench, oriented north east to south west, was located within the eastern half of the PDA (Figure 2 and Plate 5).

The stratigraphy of this trench was: topsoil (500), overlying a dark brown calcerous subsoil (518), the latter changing to a pale to mid yellow grey brown silt (517) for 4m at the south west end of the trench. Directly below the subsoil was the natural chalk substrate (519). Small quantities of burnt and worked flint were recovered from both the topsoil and subsoil.

The geophysical survey identified two possible areas of magnetic disturbance within the area of this trench (Figure 2).

2.6.2 Archaeological findings

In total, five circular or ovoid features (**501, 502, 503, 508** and **510**) were identified within this trench (Figure 6a). Of these, only **502** appears to be archaeological in origin, this being a possible posthole. None of the features correlated with the anomalies identified by the geophysical survey.

Posthole **502**, located within the south west half of the trench, was circular in plan, had near vertical sides and a flat base (0.4m wide and 0.15m deep), and its single fill (506) produced no finds (Figure 6b and Plate 15).

Features **503** and **508**, also located within the south west half of the trench, were both amorphous in plan and both appeared to be filled with a dark orange brown clayey silt. Only **503** was excavated, this proving to have an irregular, concave profile (1.3m long, 0.4m wide and 0.14m deep). No finds were recovered from either of these features.

Depression **501**, located close to the south west end of the trench, was ovoid in plan with very shallow concave sides and a concave base (0.9m wide and 0.05m deep). Its sole fill (505) yielded no finds.

Feature (**510**), located within the north east half of the trench, was ovoid in plan with steep concave sides (1m wide and 0.75m deep excavated); its sole fill (511) produced no finds.

2.6.3 Interpretation

The only confidently identified archaeological feature was undated posthole **502.** Whilst it presumably once performed a structural function, more details on its use were not found.

Of the other features, **503, 508** and **501** are thought likely the remnants of tree or plant holes, whist **510** is considered geological, possibly a small solution hollow.

2.7 Trench 6

2.7.1 Trench specifications and overburden

This trench, oriented east north east to west south west, was located within the north east corner of the PDA (Figure 2 and plate 6).

The geophysical survey identified an area of magnetic disturbance within the general area of this trench (Figure 2).

Below the topsoil (603) were deposits of modern rubble and re-deposited chalk (605, 608, 609 and 610) to a depth of 0.4m. Sondages were machine-excavated at both the northern and southern ends of the trench (Plate 16). These identified a 1.1m thick deposit of firm mid orange brown clayey silt - thought to be colluvium (606/611) - from which a small quantity of Mesolithic / early Neolithic flints was recovered (from its lower half). Below the colluvium was a layer (0.1m to 0.4m thick) of fairly friable, dark grey, loamy sandy silt (607/612) sitting directly on the weathered chalk substrate; this soil also produced a small quantity of Mesolithic / early Neolithic flints.

Environmental samples recovered from layer 612 identified mollusc shells of species commonly found within open landscapes, most notably species found within short turfed grassland (Fryer, Appendix D).

2.7.2 Archaeological findings

No significant archaeological features were identified within this trench.

2.7.3 Interpretation

The layers of modern rubble and re-deposited chalk (605, 608, 609 and 610) are most probably associated with recent housing development works around the area of the PDA.

Layer 607/612, present below the colluvium (606/611), appears likely to have been a 'buried soil', that is a remnant topsoil, possibly very early post-periglacial, and supporting a short grassland.

The colluvium (606 and 611) is considered to be the same layer as that identified in Trench 4 (411). The presence of worked flints within this material, and from the underlying buried soil (607/612), suggests that human activity was taking place within the area of the PDA during the Mesolithic / early Neolithic period.

2.8 Soil sieving

2.8.1 Introduction

A total of 17 points, totalling 18 contexts, was selected for topsoil and subsoil sieving at either end of each trench, and also in the middle of the trenches over 30m long. In each instance an eight litre sample was taken and sieved through a 10mm mesh (Plate 17).

2.8.2 Results

All of the sieved samples contained flints; however, of the 200 flints recovered during the soil sieving, 154 proved to be of natural origin. The other 46 were either worked (6) or burnt (40).

Of the six worked examples, a small Mesolithic / early Bronze Age type flake and a later prehistoric thicker flake were recovered from the topsoil (102) of Trench 1, whilst a later prehistoric flake and a possible flake were recovered from the topsoil in Trench 2 (201). A thick flake was recovered from the topsoil (403) within Trench 4, and a small Mesolithic / early Neolithic non-prismatic blade was recovered from the subsoil (514) within Trench 5.

2.9 Finds summary

A summary and catalogue of the finds can be found in Appendix C and full specialist reports can be found in Appendix D.

2.9.1 Animal bone (Dr Richard Moore)

Ten fragments of animal bone (126g) were recovered during the evaluation. Of these, four fragments were recovered from ditch **105,** whilst the remainder came from the topsoil/subsoil within Trench 3 (302, 303).

All of the material was eroded and pitted with only two fragments being diagnostic, these being a cattle tooth and metacarpal.

Other than indicating the presence of cattle during the time at which the basal fill of ditch **105** was being formed, the assemblage has little value and no recommendations for further work on this material have been made.

2.9.2 Ceramic building material (Sue Anderson)

A total of three pieces of ceramic building material (29g) was recovered during the evaluation: a single fragment each from the topsoil in Trench 1 (101), the topsoil in Trench 3 (300), and the subsoil in Trench 3 (311).

All three pieces were of similar although not identical fabrics, and although there was little to positively identify them, they most likely date to the medieval / post-medieval period. All three are abraded and are likely to have been residual within the topsoil and subsoil. No recommendations for further work on this material have been made.

2.9.3 Clay pipe (Dr Richard Moore)

Single fragments of clay pipe (total weight 17g) were recovered from each of the topsoils in Trenches 1 (108), 2 (203) and 3 (304). None of the material is diagnostic and no recommendations for further work have been made.

2.9.4 Environmental remains (Val Fryer)

Two environmental samples were recovered during the evaluation, these coming from the basal fill (107) of ditch **105,** and from the buried soil horizon (612) within Trench 6.

Assessment of the samples suggests that although the environmental assemblages are small, it appears most likely that they were largely derived from scattered refuse or midden waste. Some limited agricultural activity was almost certainly occurring within the near vicinity, with wild crops and animal bone evident within the samples.

Shells of terrestrial snails were abundant within both samples, the majority abraded, pitted, fragmented and heavily encrusted with mineral concretions, indicating that they may have been in the soil for some considerable period. The sample recovered from ditch **105** included numerous shells of species commonly found in loose rubble/scree, in hedge banks or under leaf litter, whilst that recovered from the buried soil horizon (612) contained a higher density of open country species, most notably those found within areas of short turfed grassland.

All materials suitable for C14 dating have been removed from the current samples. However, few remains are available and, therefore, the potential of this material is thought to be low to moderate.

The environmental remains have the potential to provide valuable data about the early landscape development and it is recommended that if any further work is undertaken, samples of approximately 40 to 60 litres in volume be taken from well-sealed and dated features.

2.9.5 Flint (Barry Bishop)

A total of 409 fragments of flint was recovered during the evaluation. However, of these, only 86 proved to be worked, with a further 24 (of the 409) fragments of burnt unworked flint recovered.

The majority of the assemblage came from the basal fill (107) of ditch **105** which contained 40 fragments of Mesolithic / early Neolithic flint, whilst the upper fill (106) contained a small assemblage of predominantly Bronze Age / Iron Age material. Other stratified Mesolithic / early Neolithic material came from the buried soil (612) and colluvium (611) in Trench 6.

The remainder of the worked flint came from topsoil and subsoil deposits across all the trenches.

The condition of the flint is variable and consistent with residual deposition but most shows only slight abrasion indicating that they probably had been recovered from close to their original point of deposition.

The lithic assemblage indicates that further work at the site would have the potential of significantly increasing understanding of the prehistoric activity, and any further fieldwork should focus on obtaining as large and closely contextually defined lithic assemblage as possible in the area.

2.9.6 Post Roman pottery (Sue Anderson)

Eight fragments of post-Roman pottery (44g) were recovered from the topsoil in Trenches 1, 2 and 3.

The assemblage contains post-medieval and modern ceramics of common types and is re-deposited in topsoil, therefore no recommendations for further work have been made.

2.9.7 Prehistoric pottery (Emily Edwards)

A single fragment (5g) of possible early or late Bronze Age pottery was recovered from the basal fill (107) of ditch **105**.

No recommendations for further work were made.

2.9.8 Roman pottery (Ruth Leary)

Two fragments (16g) of purported Roman pottery were recovered from the subsoil (322) within Trench 3.

One is indeed Roman, and from a grey ware vessel, probably dating to the 2nd to 3rd century AD. The remaining sherd is hard fired and probably dates to the post-Roman period.

No further work has been recommended.

3 Discussion

The findings of the evaluation can be categorised as follows:

- Post-periglacial to recent pedological/geomorphological processes
- Mesolithic or early Neolithic occupation/activity
- Possible Bronze Age or Iron Age agricultural practices (and domestic activity)
- Potential Roman activity
- Recent/modern events
- Undated features (but thought likely to belong to the above archaeological categories)

From a pedological/geomorphological point of view, perhaps of most interest is the buried soil (607/612) identified within Trench 6. Sitting directly above the weathered chalk substrate, 2m below the current ground surface, this soil possibly represents one of the first pedological horizons to have developed following the end of the most recent periglacial period which ended c.10,000 years ago. Assessment of the environmental sample recovered from the soil indicates that the PDA may have been open grassland when this soil was topsoil. Mesolithic or early Neolithic worked flints found within it give a chronological indication.

The 1.2m thick layer of brown-orange silt, above the buried soil in Trench 6, and in Trench 4, adds to the significance of the non-anthropogenic deposits within the PDA. In Trench 4, the identification below this material of an east-facing slope, suggests that the silt is filling a void, whilst its presence in the two trenches shows it occupies an area at least 15m E-W and 75m N-S in the NE corner of the PDA. The latter slopes down 8m from SW to NE, and would encourage hill-wash processes, so this material is reasonably confidently interpreted as colluvium. Its texture and structure also support this assertion. Mesolithic or early Neolithic worked flints recovered from the lower 0.5m, appear to provide a broad and useful date for the accumulation of the earlier portion of this layer. One can speculate as to what this material is filling: it could be a former channel, formed by fluvio-glacial mechanisms, or perhaps the upper fill of a pingo, a periglacial feature, examples of which are known in the region.

Many of the trenches contained features either linear or irregular/amorphous in plan, and interpreted as ‘natural’ in origin. By ‘natural’ we mean generally formed by periglacial or geological processes in the top of the weathered chalk substrate, and including phenomena such as solution hollows. Quite a few of the magnetic anomalies identified by the geophysical survey, especially the

linear ones, were subsequently shown to be natural in origin. Conversely, though, one of the linear magnetic anomalies considered to be likely natural in the geophysical report, did turn out to be archaeological (Ditch **305** in Trench 3; and Figure 2).

The worked flint assemblage indicates that the earliest identifiable human activity within the PDA belongs to the Mesolithic and/or early Neolithic period(s). The presence of these flints in the buried soil and the lower half of the colluvium suggest that the locality was being exploited either by Mesolithic hunter-gatherers, or by more settled Neolithic peoples, or both. Whilst actual cut features or discrete deposits attributable to these dates were not identified, the lithics specialist does posit that the significant quantity of Mesolithic or early Neolithic flints found in the lower fill of likely Bronze Age (or Iron Age) Ditch 105 in Trench 1, does suggest that this ditch could well have cut through an earlier (i.e. Mesolithic to early Neolithic) feature or deposit/spread.

Most of the worked flints recovered display little post-depositional abrasion, suggesting that they probably hadn't travelled far from their original point of deposition. This adds weight to the supposition that the earlier flint work is indicative of at least low-density or transient human activity taking place within the PDA during the Mesolithic and/or early Neolithic period(s).

The ditches (**105** and **107**) identified within Trench 1 probably form part of a later prehistoric field system situated within the PDA. Many of the flints from Ditch 105 are typical of Bronze Age to Iron Age industries, and are complimented by the single piece of possible Bronze Age pottery recovered. Further, the environmental remains from the basal fill of Ditch 105 point to agricultural activity taking place. Although no dating material was recovered from Ditch (**107**), its close proximity to **105** and its similar orientation, are supportive of broad contemporaneity. The butchered bone and burnt flints also found in Ditch 105, presumably deliberately dumped into the ditch whilst open, strongly hint at domestic activity, either within, or else close to, the PDA.

The flint assemblage as a whole could be indicative of prolonged human activity within the PDA, possibly as far back as the Mesolithic, with hunter-gatherers potentially exploiting the local landscape, through to later prehistoric agricultural activity as recently as the Iron Age.

Another apparent zone of human activity was recorded in Trench 3. The two narrow curvilinear gullies here (**307** and **309**), seemed to enclose an area around 6m across, and so it is tempting to regard them as the ephemeral remnant of a circular structure; that is, as former foundation trenches or drip-gullies. No artefacts were recovered these features, so they remain undated. A single piece of Roman pottery was found in the subsoil between the gullies; whilst this is a

reasonable indication of Roman activity of some kind within the PDA or nearby, it can hardly be regarded as reliable dating evidence for the gullies themselves. The virtual absence of domestic material from in and around the curvilinear features tends to indicate that if the gullies were structural, they were likely located away from any focus of associated settlement.

Two categories of undated archaeological features provide further indications of human activity within the PDA. One of these, a pair of ditches, one each in Trenches 3 and 4 (**305** and **408),** were broadly parallel, and so may represent a field system. Note they were on a different alignment to the Bronze/Iron Age ditches discussed above.

The other is made up of the four likely or possible postholes in Trenches 1, 3 and 5. The one in Trench 1 (**109**) was close to Ditch 105, so might represent domestic activity associated with the Bronze/Iron Age field system. Similarly, the two possible postholes in Trench 3 (**314, 319**) could conceivably be connected with the two curvilinear gullies. The posthole in Trench 5 (**502**) might also reflect former domestic activity, though there is no indication of date or function.

Recent/modern activity recorded within the PDA includes plough scores seen in the top of the weathered chalk/subsoils in many of the trenches, especially Trench 2. The dark loamy fill of these scars was identical to the existing ploughsoil, so they are most probably a reflection of modern ploughing. In Trench 6, layers of rubble with plastic, rope and bricks, and re-deposited chalk and topsoil, are almost undoubtedly representative of activity associated with the recent housing development immediately adjacent to the trench.

4 Conclusion

The evaluation has successfully identified significant evidence of human activity within the PDA, from as early as the Mesolithic, through to the Bronze Age or Iron Age periods.

There is a moderate to high level of confidence in the factual results of this evaluation, and in the interpretations made (some of which are provisional), due to the clarity of the archaeology, their stratigraphic relationships, and the prevailing site conditions at the time of the fieldwork.

Whilst it is difficult to determine the degree of archaeological preservation on the site, it is likely that historic/recent/modern ploughing has truncated the archaeology substantially. The shallow depth of many of the features adds weight to this argument.

Given the limited protective cover offered by the ploughsoil, typical groundworks associated with a residential development, if conducted within the PDA, would be likely to impact significantly upon the shallow archaeological deposits exposed, as well as on any similar, hitherto unknown remains which may also exist within the PDA.

The deeper archaeological findings (i.e. the worked flints in the buried soil and colluvium, and these deposits themselves) would appear to be fairly well-protected by the deep cover of colluvium. However, standard housing foundations would normally need to penetrate to the solid chalk, in which case there would be an impact on these deeper deposits. That said, such an impact would be likely to be fairly minor.

The nature of any further archaeological works within the PDA in advance of development is a matter for the Senior Archaeologist for South Cambridgeshire, and the Developer.

Based on the evaluation results, the findings would appear to be of local to regional importance, and therefore the significance of any adverse effects is considered likely to be moderate.

The evaluation works have ensured the long-term survival of the data collected, through the compilation of a site archive, and this report.

5 Archive

The evaluation produced the following document archive, under the site code of VWM14.

Table 5.1 Archive quantification

Archive component	Count
Number record	1
Context indices	6
Context records	96
Trench records	6
Sample Indices	1
Sample records	2
Registered finds indices	0
Registered finds record	0
Photographic registers	2
Black and White photographs	120
Digital images	225
Drawing indices	1
Drawings	18
Permatrace sheets	4

The archive will be deposited with Cambridgeshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (CHET).

6 Acknowledgements

Network Archaeology would like to thank the following people and organisations for their assistance during the evaluation and the production of this report.

Table 6.1 Acknowledgements

Organisation	Name	Position	Contribution
Cambridgeshire Archaeology	Kasia Gdaniec	Senior Archaeologist	External monitoring
The Howlett Consultancy	Dr Christopher Howlett	Director	Consultant
n/a	Sue Anderson	External specialist	Specialist finds reports
n/a	Barry Bishop	External specialist	Specialist finds reports
n/a	Emily Edwards	External specialist	Specialist finds reports
n/a	Val Fryer	External specialist	Specialist finds reports
n/a	Ruth Leary	External specialist	Specialist finds reports
Landline Survey	G Handley	Surveyor	DGPS Survey
Network Archaeology Ltd	Christopher Taylor	Technical Director	Project management; Evaluation
	Claire Lingard	Technical Director	Evaluation; Finds processing
	Andrew Hunn	Senior Project Officer	Evaluation
	Stephen Thorpe	Project Officer	Evaluation; Report writing
	Richard Moore	Project Manager	Specialist finds reports
	Caroline Kemp	Finds Supervisor	Finds processing

7 Bibliography

ACAO	1993	Model briefs and Specifications for Archaeological Assessments and Field Evaluations	
ALGAO	2003	Standards for field archaeology in the east of England	EAA occasional paper 14
Department for Communities and Local Government	2010	PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment	The Stationery Office
Department for Communities and Local Government	2008	PPS11: Regional Spatial Strategies	Update 2/2008
EAA	2005	Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England	Occasional Paper 14
English Heritage	1991	The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2nd edition	London
English Heritage	1997	Sustaining the historic environment: new perspectives on the future	
Ferguson L.M. & Murray D.M.	1997	Archaeological Documentary Archives: Preparation, Curation and Storage, Paper **1**,	Institute of Field Archaeologists' Manchester
IFA	2008 (194, revised 2001)	Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological material	
IFA	2008 (194, revised 2001)	Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds, Waterlogged Wood)	
IFA	2008 (194, revised 2001)	Code of Conduct	
MGC	1992	Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections	Museums and Galleries Commission London
Network Archaeology Ltd	2014	Victoria Way Melbourn, Cambridgeshire. Written Scheme of Investigation: Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenches and Soil Testing	Unpublished client report

Society of Museum Archaeologists	1995	Towards an accessible archaeological archive - the transfer of archaeological archives to museums: guidelines for use in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales	Society for Museum Archaeologists, London
Walker, K.	1990	Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage.	United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Archaeology Section (London)
Watkinson, D & Neil A. V	1998	First Aid for Finds	Rescue Publications, Hertford

APPENDIX A

DESK-BASED APPRAISAL

A desk-based assessment of the PDA was carried out (The Howlett Consultancy 2013). This noted that:

- The application area contains no known heritage assets. There are no records of historic buildings existing within the proposed application area, and no current evidence of archaeological remains;
- The application area lies in a wider locality where there are significant archaeological remains, particularly prehistoric funerary monuments, an Anglo Saxon cemetery, and a smaller number of other later prehistoric remains.
- In 2000-02, archaeological excavation identified a Saxon cemetery and two phases of prehistoric activity: pits dating to the Neolithic/early Bronze Age and post-built structures and pits dating to the late Bronze Age/Iron Age perhaps representing more permanent occupation. The Anglo-Saxon cemetery extended to within 31m of the west edge of the PDA.
- In 2004, six evaluation trenches opened in the Victoria Way development, immediately to the east of the PDA, revealed two small features and quantities of struck flint. A similar scale of activity was indicated during the evaluation of the site for the new cemetery, located immediately to the south of the PDA.

The desk-based assessment concluded that there is likelihood for small-scale prehistoric activity within the PDA.

The most recent investigation, a geophysical survey, detected faint linear anomalies across the PDA. An interpretation of these as geological in origin was thought most probable. There were also scattered patches of magnetic disturbance consistent with the presence of ferrous objects, concentrated in particular around the edge of the PDA (Stratascan 2013).

APPENDIX B

CONTEXT DATABASE

Trench	Context	Type	Fill of	Dimensions (m)	Description	Interpretation	Same as	Finds (Y/N)
1	100	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	101 103 108	Y
1	101	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	100 103 108	Y
1	102	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Subsoil	104 120	Y
1	103	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	100 101 108	Y
1	104	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Subsoil	102 120	Y
1	105	Cut		1.8m wide and 0.66m deep	Linear oriented ENE-WSW with moderate concave sides and a flat base	Ditch		N
1	106	Fill	**105**	0.1m thick	Soft pale grey-brown clayey silt with frequent chalk pebbles	Upper fill of ditch		Y
1	107	Fill	**105**	0.56m thick	Soft dark brown-grey clayey silt with sparse chalk pebbles	Basal fill of ditch		Y
1	108	Layer		0.26m thick	Soft dark grey clayey silt with frequent chalk pebbles	Topsoil	100 101 103	Y
1	109	Cut		0.6m long, 0.55m wide and 0.12m deep	Circular cut with moderate concave sides and a flat base	Posthole		N
1	110	Fill	**109**	0.12m thick	Mid orange-brown soft clayey silt	Sole fill of posthole		N
1	111	Cut		0.6m wide and 0.33m deep	Linear oriented broadly NE-SW with irregular concave sides and a flat base	Possible ditch. Truncated by animal disturbance		N
1	112	Fill	**111**	0.33m thick	Mixed orange-brown to pale grey-brown clayey silt with moderate chalk pebbles	Sole fill of possible ditch		N
1	113	Cut		1m wide and 0.02m deep	Linear oriented WNW-ESE with almost imperceptible shallow sides and a flat base	Plough furrow		N
1	114	Fill	**113**	0.02m thick	Soft mid grey clayey silt	Sole fill of plough furrow		N
1	115	Cut		1.6m maximum length, 0.65m wide and 0.2m deep	Amorphous cut with an irregular profile and base	Probable plant hole		N

Trench	Context	Type	Fill of	Dimensions (m)	Description	Interpretation	Same as	Finds (Y/N)
1	116	Fill	**115**	0.2m thick	Pale grey-brown soft clayey silt with frequent chalk pebbles	Sole fill of plant hole		N
1	117	Cut		0.6m wide and 0.16m deep	Linear oriented ENE-WSW with moderate concave sides and a concave base	Gully running parallel with **105**		N
1	118	Fill	**117**	0.16m thick	Soft pale grey-brown clayey silt with frequent chalk pebbles	Sole fill of gully		N
1	119	Layer		n/a	Compact chalk	Natural substrate		N
1	120	Layer		0.15m thick max	Soft mid grey-brown clayey silt with occasional chalk pebbles	Subsoil. Only visible at NW end of trench	102 104	N
1	121	Cut		1.1m wide and 0.1m deep	Sinuous linear oriented broadly NE-SW with an irregular concave profile	Periglacial feature		N
1	122	Fill	**121**	0.1m thick	Pale yellow-grey / ginger friable calcareous silt	Sole fill of periglacial feature		N
2	200	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	201 202 203	Y
2	201	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	200 202 203	Y
2	202	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil		Y
2	203	Layer		0.3m thick	Soft dark grey-brown clayey silt	Topsoil		Y
2	204	Layer		n/a	Compact chalk	Natural substrate		N
3	300	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	301 303 304	Y
3	301	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	300 303 304	Y
3	302	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Subsoil	311 322	Y
3	303	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	300 301 304	Y

Trench	Context	Type	Fill of	Dimensions (m)	Description	Interpretation	Same as	Finds (Y/N)
3	304	Layer		0.3m maximum depth	Soft dark brown silty clay	Topsoil	300 301 303	Y
3	305	Cut		1.34m wide and 0.4m deep	Linear oriented NNW-SSE with steep concave sides and a flat base	Ditch		N
3	306	Fill	**305**	0.26m thick	Soft pale to mid grey-brown silt with sparse chalk pebbles	Upper fill of ditch		N
3	307	Cut		0.4m wide and 0.14m deep	Linear oriented NW-SE turning slightly ESE. Shallow concave sides and a flat broad base	Gully		N
3	308	Fill	**307**	0.14m thick	Soft dark grey-brown clayey silt with occasional chalk pebbles	Sole fill of ditch		N
3	309	Layer		n/a	Compact chalk	Natural substrate		N
3	310	Fill	**305**	0.16m thick	Soft pale grey-brown calcareous clayey silt	Basal fill of ditch		N
3	311	Layer		0.15m thick max	Pale grey calcerous clayey silt	Subsoil	322	Y
3	312	Cut		0.4m wide and 0.14m deep	Possible curvilinear oriented NW-SE. Moderate concave sides and a flat base	Possible gully		N
3	313	Fill	**312**	0.14m thick	Soft pale grey clayey silt with occasional chalk pebbles	Sole fill of possible ditch		N
3	314	Cut		0.32m wide and 0.12m deep	Circular cut with steep concave sides and a concave base	Possible post hole		N
3	315	Fill	**314**	0.08m thick	Compact pale grey calcareous silt	Basal fill of post hole		N
3	316	Cut		0.9m wide and 0.2m deep	Linear oriented NNW-SSE with an irregular concave profile	Possible wheel-rutting		N
3	317	Fill	**316**	0.2m thick	Compact mid to dark grey calcareous clay	Fill of wheel-rutting		N
3	318	Spread		n/a	Flint rich compact pale grey clay	Possible flint scatter		Y
3	319	Fill	**314**	0.03m thick	Soft dark brown clayey silt with sparse chalk pebbles	Upper fill of possible post hole		N
3	320	**VOID**						N
3	321	Layer		0.1m thick max	Mixed dark grey-brown calcareous clay	Plough-dragged soil		N
3	322	Layer		0.15m thick max	Pale grey calcareous clayey silt	Subsoil over 318	311	Y
4	400	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	401 403	Y
4	401	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	400 403	Y
4	402	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Subsoil	404	N

Trench	Context	Type	Fill of	Dimensions (m)	Description	Interpretation	Same as	Finds (Y/N)
4	403	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	400 401	Y
4	404	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Subsoil	402	Y
4	405	Cut		2.6m wide and 0.5m deep	Linear oriented broadly N-S with moderate concave sides and a flat base	Possible ditch		N
4	406	Fill	**405**	0.5m thick	Soft, friable pale grey-brown calcareous silt	Sole fill of possible ditch		N
4	407	Layer		0.24m thick	Mid to dark grey-brown soft clayey silt	Topsoil	400 401 403	Y
4	408	Layer		0.28m thick	Mid grey-brown clayey silt	Subsoil	402 404	N
4	409	Layer		n/a	Compact chalk	Natural substrate		N
4	410	Deposit		2.2m visible width, 0.23m deep excavated	Soft pale brown-grey sandy silt	Natural sand. Continues beneath natural chalk		N
4	411	Deposit		1.2m thick	Soft mid brown clayey silt	Colluvium in SE half of trench		N
5	500	Layer		0.27m thick	Pale to mid grey fine, friable calcareous silt	Topsoil	512 515 516	Y
5	501	Cut		0.9m wide and 0.05m deep	Ovoid cut with very shallow concave sides and a concave base	Plant hole		N
5	502	Cut		0.4m wide and 0.15m deep	Circular cut with near vertical sides and a flat base	Posthole		N
5	503	Cut		1.3m long, 0.4m wide and 0.14m deep	Amorphous cut with an irregular profile and base	Plant hole		N
5	504	Fill	**503**	0.14m thick	Soft pale grey-brown calcareous silty clay	Sole fill of plant hole		N
5	505	Fill	**501**	0.05m thick	Soft dark grey-brown clayey silt	Sole fill of plant hole		N
5	506	Fill	**502**	0.15m thick	Soft dark orange-brown clayey silt with sparse chalk pebbles	Sole fill of posthole		N
5	507	**VOID**						
5	508	Cut		1m long and 0.3m wide visible	Amorphous cut adjacent to **503**	Unexcavated plant hole		N
5	509	Fill	**508**	n/a	Soft dark orange-brown clayey silt with sparse chalk pebbles	Sole visible fill		N
5	510	Cut		1m wide and 0.75m deep	Ovoid cut with steep concave sides	Natural feature. Not fully excavated		N

Trench	Context	Type	Fill of	Dimensions (m)	Description	Interpretation	Same as	Finds (Y/N)
5	511	Fill	**510**	0.75m deep excavated	Pale orange-brown coarse silt	Fill of natural feature		N
5	512	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	500 515 516	Y
5	513	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Subsoil	514	N
5	514	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Subsoil	513	Y
5	515	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	500 512 516	N
5	516	Layer			Number assigned to sieving	Topsoil	500 512 515	N
5	517	Layer		0.14m thick	Pale to mid yellow-grey-brown fine silt	Subsoil covering 4m at the SW end of trench		N
5	518	Layer		0.25m thick	Soft dark brown calcareous silt	Subsoil across remainder of trench		N
5	519	Layer		n/a	Compact chalk	Natural substrate		N
6	600	Layer		n/a	Number assigned to sieving - South end only	Topsoil	603	N
6	601	Layer		n/a	Number assigned to sieving - South end only	Subsoil	604	N
6	602	**VOID**						
6	603	Layer		0.30m thick	South 3m of trench only	Topsoil		Y
6	604	Layer		0.20m thick	Number assigned to uppermost 20cm of subsoil/colluvium	Subsoil (colluvium)		N
6	605	Layer		0.20m thick	centre & north of trench, overlying modern rubble/chalk	Re-deposited modern topsoil		N
6	606	Layer		1.1m thick	Firm mid-orange brown clayey silt	Colluvium (deep slot at north end)	611	N
6	607	Layer		0.4m thick	Dark brownish grey clayey-silt. v. occasional stones	Buried Soil (deep slot at north end)	612	N
6	608	Layer		0.10m+ thick	grey/white crumbled chalk with occasional brown silt/clay inclusions	Re-deposited chalk - centre of trench only	610	N
6	609	Layer		0.30m+ thick	Mixture of modern bricks, stones, plastic, rope, in a yellow-brown clayey silt matrix	Modern rubble		N
6	610	Layer		0.10m+ thick	grey/white crumbled chalk with occasional brown silt/clay inclusions	Re-deposited chalk - north end of trench only	608	N

Trench	Context	Type	Fill of	Dimensions (m)	Description	Interpretation	Same as	Finds (Y/N)
6	611	Layer		1.1m thick	Firm mid-orange brown clayey silt	Colluvium (deep slot at south end)	606	Y
6	612	Layer		0.4m thick	Dark brownish grey clayey-silt. v. occasional stones	Buried Soil (deep slot at south end)	607	Y
6	613	Layer		n/a	Moderately soft, pale whitish grey fairly fine grained chalk with occasional mid brown clay/silt inclusions	Weathered chalk bedrock		N

APPENDIX C

Finds catalogue

Trench	Context	Bone	CBM		Clay pipe	Flint			Pottery						Grand Total
		Animal	? Med	Pmed	U/D	Burnt	Natural	Preh	LBA/EBA	Roman	Med/Pmed	Emod	Pmed	Post Roman	
1	100						11								11
	101		1			1	11								13
	102						4	2							6
	103					1	20								21
	104						4								4
	106	2				9		9							20
	107	4				2	1	46	1						54
	108				1	2	1	4			1				9
2	200					2	11								13
	201						9	2							11
	202						11								11
	203				1	2	2						1		6
3	300			1			11								12
	301						13								13
	302	2					4								6
	303	2				1	19					3	1		26
	304				1			1			1				3
	311			1			7								8
	322						139			1				1	141
4	400						9								9
	401					1									1
	403						7	1							8
	404						3								3
	407					2		6							8
5	500							6							6
	512					1									1
	514							1							1
6	603						2								2
	611							5							5
	612							3							3
Grand Total		**10**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**24**	**299**	**86**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**2**	**1**	**435**

APPENDIX D

SPECIALIST FINDS REPORTS

Animal Bone

Dr Richard Moore

A small assemblage of animal bone, from an evaluation of development land at Victoria Way, Melbourn, Cambridgeshire, was assessed.

The bone was retrieved from four contexts (see table 1). There were ten fragments in all, weighing, in total, 126g. All but two of the pieces are small fragments, not readily identifiable. The exceptions are the distal end of a cattle metacarpal (78g) and a cattle lower right third molar (41g), both from context 107. The tooth, which has a complete crown but broken roots, is in wear stage g (Grant, quoted in Hillson 1986, app 2) and would have come from a mature animal of 3 years old or more (ibid., 204-6).

All of the bone is in a similar condition. Although still maintaining structural coherence, the surfaces are all very eroded and pitted, indicating aggressive soil conditions.

Beyond indicating that utilisation of cattle at the time that context 107 was being formed, this small assemblage has little evidential value, and no recommendations are made for retention in the site archive.

Table 1: Catalogue of animal bone

Context	Count	Wt/g
106	2	2
107	4	122
302	2	1
303	2	1
Total	**10**	**126**

Context 100 also produced a fragment of oyster shell, weighing 1g and with a maximum dimension of 22mm.

References

Hilson, S. 1986. *Teeth*, Cambridge Manuals in Archaeology, Cambridge Univ. press

Ceramics

Sue Anderson

Post-Roman pottery

Eight sherds of pottery weighing 44g were collected from four contexts, all topsoil. Table 2 shows the quantification by fabric and a summary catalogue by context is included as table 3. A full record is included in the archive in MS Access format.

Table 2: Catalogue of post-Roman pottery

Fabric	Code	No.	Wt (g)	MNV
Glazed red earthenware	GRE	2	31	2
Refined factory-made whitewares	REFW	3	11	3
Industrial slipwares	INDS	1	1	1
Yellow ware	YELW	2	1	2
Totals		**8**	**44**	**8**

Glazed red earthenwares of post-medieval (broadly 16th-18th century) date were recovered from (108) and (304). Both were base fragments with internal orange glaze. The larger of the two, from (108), was a footstand base which showed signs of wear. The smaller fragment from (304) was sooted externally and may be a fragment of a flatware skillet.

One base sherd of a refined whiteware plate of probable 19th-century date was recovered from (203). The decoration was in the form of a black transfer-printed floral design with an indigo wash over the print. Five small, damaged sherds of factory-made wares, also probably 19th-century, were collected from (303). They comprised one plain and one printed whiteware sherds, a piece of industrial slipware with blue slip externally, and two small flakes of yellow ware.

Ceramic building material

Three fragments of CBM (29g) were recovered from three contexts (Table 4). A tiny abraded fragment from topsoil (101) appears to be in a silty estuarine clay fabric and may be a piece of medieval brick. Two fragments of post-medieval plain roof tile were also recovered. A fragment from topsoil (300) was in a medium sandy fabric with ferrous inclusions, and a fragment from subsoil (311) was in a fine sandy fabric.

Recommendations

This material has been fully recorded and no further work is required. The assemblage contains post-medieval and modern ceramics of common types and is redeposited in topsoil, therefore it is not recommended that the material is retained.

Table 3: Pottery

Context	Fabric	No	Wt/g	Form	Rim	Decoration	Spotdate
108	GRE	1	23				16th-18th c.
203	REFW	1	9			black floral transfer with indigo wash	19th c.
303	YELW	2	1				19th/20th c.
303	INDS	1	1			light blue slip ext	L.18th-19th c.
303	REFW	1	1				19th/20th c.
303	REFW	1	1			transfer print blue willow border	19th/20th c.
304	GRE	1	8				16th-18th c.

Table 4: Ceramic building material

Context	Fabric	Form	No	Wt	Abr	Peg	Mortar	Notes	Date
101	est?	EB?	1	1	+			tiny flake pinkish fine silty clay	med?
300	msfe	RTP	1	21	+				pmed
311	fs	RTP	1	7	+			1 burnt flint frag	pmed

Clay pipe

Dr Richard Moore

Three clay pipe fragments were recovered, as detailed in table 5 below.

Table 5: Catalogue of clay pipe

Context	Weight/g	Description	Length	Stem diam.	Hole diam.
108	6	Base of bowl, part of stem. Flat heel	35.5mm	9mm	3mm
203	2	Stem fragment. Very slender	46mm	5.5mm	1.5mm
304	9	Stem fragment	69mm	9.5mm	3mm

None of the fragments were closely datable and no further work is recommended.

Environmental remains

Val Fryer

Introduction and method statement

Evaluation excavations at Melbourn, undertaken by Network Archaeology, recorded ditches, gullies and other discrete features of probable prehistoric and later date. Samples for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from the fill of a ditch within trench 1 (sample 1000 context 107) and from a possible buried soil recorded at the base of a periglacial feature within trench 6 (sample 6000 context 612). Both contexts were thought to be of prehistoric date.

The samples were processed by manual water flotation/washover and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table 6. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (2010) for the plant macrofossils and Kerney and Cameron (1979) for the mollusc shells. All plant remains were charred. Modern un-charred roots, seeds and arthropod remains were also recorded.

The non-floating residues were collected in a 1mm mesh sieve and will be sorted when dry. Any artefacts/ecofacts will be retained for further specialist analysis.

Results

Both assemblages are largely composed of small fragments of rotted chalk and what appear to be buff/grey mineralised soil concretions. However, barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains are also recorded along with small fragments of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) nutshell. Preservation is poor to moderate, with the grains being puffed and distorted (probably as a result of combustion at high temperatures) and the nutshell fragments being highly comminuted. Charcoal/charred wood fragments are also present along with small pieces of charred root or stem. The assemblage from sample 6000 includes a small fragment of indeterminate tuber. Other remains are scarce, and it is thought most likely that many are intrusive within the feature fills, having been introduced via either the bioturbation of the deposits or subsequent plough disturbance. However, it is noted that the assemblage from sample 1000 does include a number of

bleached and severely abraded bone fragments, some or all of which may be contemporary with the context from which the sample was taken.

Although specific sieving for molluscan remains was not undertaken, shells of terrestrial snails are abundant within both samples. Some specimens are well preserved, suggesting that they may be later contaminants, but the majority of the shells are abraded, pitted, fragmented and heavily encrusted with mineral concretions, indicating that they may have been in the soil column for some considerable period. However, it has yet to be determined whether any may be of prehistoric date. Sample 1000 includes numerous shells of species commonly found in loose rubble/scree, in hedge banks or under leaf litter, while sample 6000 contains a higher density of open country species, most notably those found within areas of short turfed grassland.

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In summary, although the assemblages are small, it would appear most likely that the recovered remains are largely derived from scattered refuse or midden waste. Some limited agricultural activity was almost certainly occurring within the near vicinity, with wild crops (i.e. the hazel nuts) and animal products (i.e. the bone fragments) also being important components of the local diet.

Although the current assemblages are limited in composition, they clearly illustrate that plant macrofossils, with the potential to provide valuable data about early landscape development within this area of Cambridgeshire, are preserved within the archaeological horizon at Melbourn. Therefore, if further interventions are planned, it is recommended that additional plant macrofossil samples of approximately 40 – 60 litres in volume are taken from all well-sealed and dated features recorded during excavation.

All materials suitable for C14 dating have been removed from the current samples and placed in individual glass vials. However, few remains are available and, therefore, the potential of this material is thought to be low to moderate.

References

Kerney, M.P. and Cameron, R.A.D. *A Field Guide to the Land Snails of Britain and North-west Europe*, 1979 Collins. London

Stace, C., 2010 *New Flora of the British Isles*. 3rd edition. Cambridge University Press

Table 6: Environmental remains

Sample No.	**1000**	**6000**
Context No.	**107**	**612**
Trench No.	**1**	**6**
Plant macrofossils		
Hordeum sp. (grains)	xcf	xcf
Triticum sp. (grains)		xcf
Cereal indet. (grains)		x
Corylus avellana L. (nutshell frags.)	x	xcf
Charcoal <2mm	xx	x
Charcoal >2mm	xxx	x
Charcoal >5mm	x	x
Charred root/stem	x	x
Indet. tuber frag.		x
Other remains		
Black porous 'cokey' material	x	x
Black tarry material	x	x
Bone	xx	x
Burnt/fired clay	x	
Small coal frags.	xx	x
Small mammal/amphibian bone	x	
Molluscs		
Woodland/shade loving species		
Acanthinula aculeata	x	
Aegopinella sp.	x	x
Clausilia sp.		xcf
Discus rotundatus	xxxx	xx
Ena sp.	xfg	
Helicigona lapicida	xfg	
Macrogastra rolphii	xcf	
Oxychilus sp.	xcf	x
Pomatius elegans	xxx	xx
(operculi)	x	x
Trichia striolata	xcf	xcf
Vitrea sp.	x	
Zonitidae indet.	xx	x
Open country species		
Helicella itala	xx	xx
Pupilla muscorum	xx	xxxx
Vallonia sp.	xx	xxxx
V. costata	x	xx
Vertigo pygmaea		x
Catholic species		
Cochlicopa sp.	x	x
*Tric**hia hispida*** **group**	x	xx
Marsh/freshwater slum species		
Succinea sp.	xcf	
Sample volume (litres)	**30**	**30**
Volume of flot (litres)	**0.1**	**<0.1**
% flot sorted	**100 %**	**100 %**

x = 1 – 10 specimens xx = 11 – 50 specimens xxx = 51 – 100 specimens xxxx = 100+ specimens

cf = compare fg = fragment

Lithic assessment

Barry Bishop

Introduction

The archaeological investigations at the above site resulted in the recovery of 86 pieces of struck flint and a small quantity of unworked burnt flint. This report quantifies and provides a brief description of the main characteristics of the assemblage, and discusses its archaeological significance with the aim of helping to inform the future management of the site's archaeological resources. This text should be read in conjunction with the catalogue which lists the material by individual context (Table 7).

Table 7: Quantification

Trench	Context	Struck Flake	Retouched Flake	Unworked Burnt Flint	Natural
1	Sieving	2		2	50
1	Topsoil	4		2	1
1	Ditch 105	48	7	11	1
2	Sieving	2		2	31
2	Topsoil			2	2
3	Sieving			1	47
3	Topsoil	1			
3	Subsoil				146
4	Sieving	1		1	19
4	Topsoil	4	2	2	
5	Sieving	1		1	
5	Topsoil	6			
6	Topsoil				2
6	Colluvium	5			
6	Buried soil	3			
All	**Total**	**77**	**9**	**24**	**299**

Description

As was anticipated by the excavators, of the 409 pieces of the lithic material recovered during the evaluation and sieving programme, the bulk comprises unworked sub-angular pebbles and small cobbles of flint. Although many of these pieces do show conchoidal fracture scars, the nature of

the striking indicates incidental mechanical damage, such as from plough strikes or crushing from heavy machinery. This includes the large quantity of flint recovered from the sub-soil in Trench 3, a few pieces of which do at least superficially resemble casually and poorly worked cores. However, given their recovery from a modern trackway, the random nature of their fracturing and the high levels of crushing and abrasion, they are more likely to have been formed from unintentional mechanical damage.

Burnt Flint

Twenty-four pieces of unworked burnt flint were recovered (Tables 7 and 8). The severity of burning was variable and the small quantities present would suggest the incidental burning of flint clasts in soils underlying hearths. It is most likely to represent general 'background' residual waste, most probably from domestic-type activities. The majority came from ditch [105] but small quantities were recovered from all trenches with the exception of Trench 6.

Struck Flint

A total of 86 deliberately struck pieces were recovered, consisting mostly of flakes and with a high proportion of retouched pieces but no cores (Tables 7 and 8). Their condition is variable, as would be consistent with residual deposition, but most pieces show only slight edge-chipping and abrasion, suggesting that they had been recovered from close to where originally discarded. The raw materials appear to mostly comprise fine-grained translucent very dark grey or black flint, although heavily recortication precludes identifying the colour of most pieces. Cortex and the presence of occasional thermal surfaces indicate that the flint was obtained from derived or shallow surface deposits on the Holywell Chalk that can be found to the south of the site.

The bulk of the struck flint came from ditch [105] which produced 55 pieces, 46 from its primary fill and the remainder from its upper fill. The assemblage from the lower fill includes a number of blades than can be dated to the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic period, one of which has been serrated and another shows indications of edge utilization. The majority of the flakes also appear competently produced, suggesting a similar date and these include a further four retouched implements; an additional serrate, an edge-trimmed flake and two flakes with converging retouch at their distal ends, probably sturdy piercing tools. A few of the flakes are much thicker, however, and have wide unmodified striking platforms. Whilst not strictly diagnostic, these pieces are more typical of later prehistoric industries, particularly those of the later second and first millennia BC. The upper fill contained nine struck flints, comprising eight flakes and a retouched implement. The

retouched implement comprises a narrow flake that has irregular oblique scalar retouch along its right margin near its distal end and, although its distal tip is missing, it is most likely to have been a piercing tool similar to those from the lower fill. The flakes vary in form but most are quite thick and more akin to later prehistoric examples. If the proposed dating for this material is correct it would suggest that the ditch most likely belongs to the later prehistoric period but contains significant quantities of earlier material, perhaps from a scatter or feature that has been truncated by the ditch.

The remaining struck pieces were recovered in small quantities from the soil horizons of all of the trenches. The topsoil in Trench 4 [407] provided six pieces, comprising a blade, a rejuvenation flake struck from a blade cores, two flakes and two retouched implements. Both of the latter consist of edge-retouched flakes, one possibly being a fragment of a blunted-back knife, the other has shallow semi-invasive bifacial retouch, and is also probably a knife. The topsoil in Trench 5 produced six flakes which include a partially crested blade. The colluvium in Trench 6 contained five pieces which include two blades and a blade-like flake, and the buried soil in that trench produced three pieces, including a prismatic blade. The topsoil in Trenches 1, 2 and 3 also produced small assemblages of struck pieces.

Significance and Recommendation

Given the size of the areas investigated, the quantity of struck flint recovered may be regarded as relatively high. The assemblages from both the ditch and the soil horizons are dominated by blades or flakes that have been generated from systematic reduction techniques and which can be date to the Mesolithic or Neolithic periods. However, scattered amongst this material there are also small quantities of much broader and thicker flakes which are likely to belong to the later prehistoric period. This pattern of flint use has been noted elsewhere in the area and indicates persistent and fairly intensive occupation throughout the prehistoric period (e.g. Billington 2013; Bishop 2014a 2014b; 2014c).

The lithic assemblage indicates that further work at the site would have the potential of significantly increasing understanding of the prehistoric activity in the area. Should further work be considered, the assemblage reported here should be re-documented in conjunction with any additional material found following the completion of the archaeological programmes. From the point of view of the lithic material, any further fieldwork should focus on obtaining as large and closely contextually defined lithic assemblage as possible, in order to attempt to understand the nature, extent and chronology of any prehistoric lithic-based activities. Should sufficient quantities

of lithic artefacts be procured from any future work, full metrical, typological and technological analysis may be warranted.

Bibliography

Billington, L. 2013 *Lithics report*. In: C. Lewis and A. Pryor, *Archaeological Test Pit Excavations in Meldreth, Cambridgeshire, 2013*, 124-126. Access Cambridge Archaeology / McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research.

Bishop, B.J. 2014a *Lithic Assessment: Archaeological Evaluation at land off New Road, Melbourn, Cambridgeshire*. Unpublished Oxford Archaeology East Report.

Bishop, B.J. 2014b *Lithic Assessment: Archaeological Evaluation at the Sub-Station, Melbourn, Cambridgeshire*. Unpublished Oxford Archaeology East Report.

Bishop, B.J. 2014c *Lithic Assessment: Archaeological Investigations at Bury Lane, Meldreth, Cambridgeshire*. Unpublished Archaeological Project Services Report.

Table 8: Flint catalogue

Trench	Context	Interpretation	Struck flint flakes (no.)	Retouched Implements (no.)	Cores (no.)	Burnt Flint (no.)	Natural (no.)	Comments
1	100	Topsoil					11	
1	101	Topsoil				1	11	Small fragment of heavily burnt flint
1	102	Subsoil	2				4	Small Meso-EBA type flake and a later prehistoric thicker flake
1	103	Topsoil				1	20	Small fragment of heavily burnt flint
1	104	Subsoil					4	
1	106	Upper fill of ditch 105	8	1		9		Mix of mostly thick BA-IA flakes but also some probably earlier including a distally retouched flake. Also fragments of heavily burnt flint
1	107	Basal fill of ditch 105	40	6		2	1	Mostly Meso-ENeo flakes, blades and retouched implements, some thicker an possibly later flakes
1	108	Topsoil	4			2	1	Struck flakes include a blade-like flake and three thick flakes. Also fragments of heavily burnt flint
2	200	Topsoil				2	11	Heavily burnt fragments
2	201	Topsoil	2				9	Later prehistoric thick crudely struck flake and a possibly struck flake fragment.
2	202	Topsoil					11	
2	203	Topsoil				2	2	Heavily burnt fragments
3	300	Topsoil					11	
3	301	Topsoil					13	
3	302	Subsoil					4	
3	303	Topsoil				1	19	lightly burnt flint fragment
3	304	Topsoil	1					Badly struck flake
3	311	Subsoil					7	
3	322	Subsoil over 318					139	
4	400	Topsoil					9	
4	401	Topsoil				1		Single small heavily burnt flint fragment
4	403	Topsoil	1				7	Thick flake
4	404	Subsoil					3	
4	407	Topsoil	4	2		2		Neolithic struck flint including two knives. Also heavily burnt flint fragments
5	500	Topsoil	6					Includes a crested blade
5	512	Topsoil				1		Moderately burnt flint fragment
5	514	Subsoil	1					Small Meso- Neo non-prismatic blade
6	603	Topsoil					2	
6	611	Colluvium (south end)	5					Includes two blades of Meso - ENeo date. Also 2 heavily burnt flint fragments
6	612	Buried Soil (south end)	3					Includes a prismatic blade of Meso-ENeo date

Prehistoric pottery

Emily Edwards

One sherd, weighting 5g, was recovered from a ditch fill (107). This plain body sherd only retained one surface; the internal face was missing. The fabric from which it was manufactured (see description below), given that one small sherd cannot truly represent the character of an entire vessel, appeared reminiscent of early Bronze Age or Late Bronze Age fabrics. This single sherd cannot be relied upon for dating of context 107.

> **GF1** - Abundant amounts of fine, soft grog-like material, worn and sub-angular, sized from >1–4mm, black in a grey matrix, containing shell. No sand. Sparse angular quartz grains, sized >1mm. Sparse flint, red and black, no white flint. Soft, smooth exterior surface displaying regular amounts of fine dark grains, >1mm, possibly glauconite, that are not present in the fabric matrix.

No further work necessary.

Roman pottery

Ruth Leary

Two ceramic fragments from context 322 were submitted for identification. One, a grey ware rim sherd (7g), comes from a jar with everting rim, beaded at the top. This is not closely datable but would fit a date range in the second to third century. The other is a basal sherd with at least one pre-firing perforation. The surfaces and breaks are covered with white matter which reacts to hydrochloric acid and may be limescale. The very hard firing is consistent with a date range after the Roman period, perhaps very late.

APPENDIX E

PLATES

Plate 1: Trench 1, post-investigation, looking NNW

Plate 2: Trench 2, post-investigation, looking NNE

Plate 3: Trench 3, pre-investigation, looking E

Plate 4: Trench 4, post-investigation, looking ESE

Plate 5: Trench 5, pre-investigation, looking SW, showing natural features

Plate 6: Trench 6, looking SSW, showing modern rubble/disturbance

Plate 7: Trench 1, prehistoric ditch 105, looking ENE

Plate 8: Trench 1, ditch 111, looking NE

Plate 9: Trench 1, posthole 109, looking NW

Plate 10: Trench 1, possible plant hole 115, looking SW

Plate 11: Trench 3, ditch 305, looking NW

Plate 12: Trench 3, curvilinear gully 307, looking NW

Plate 13: Trench 4, ditch 405, looking NE

Plate 14: Trench 4, looking E, showing machining of colluvium 411, and chalk shelf

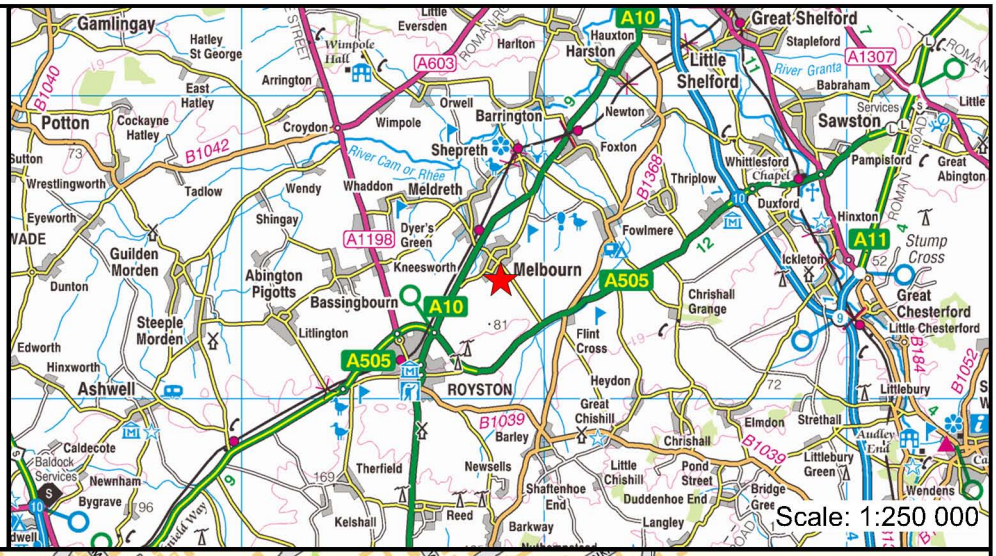
Plate 15: Trench 5, posthole 502, looking SE

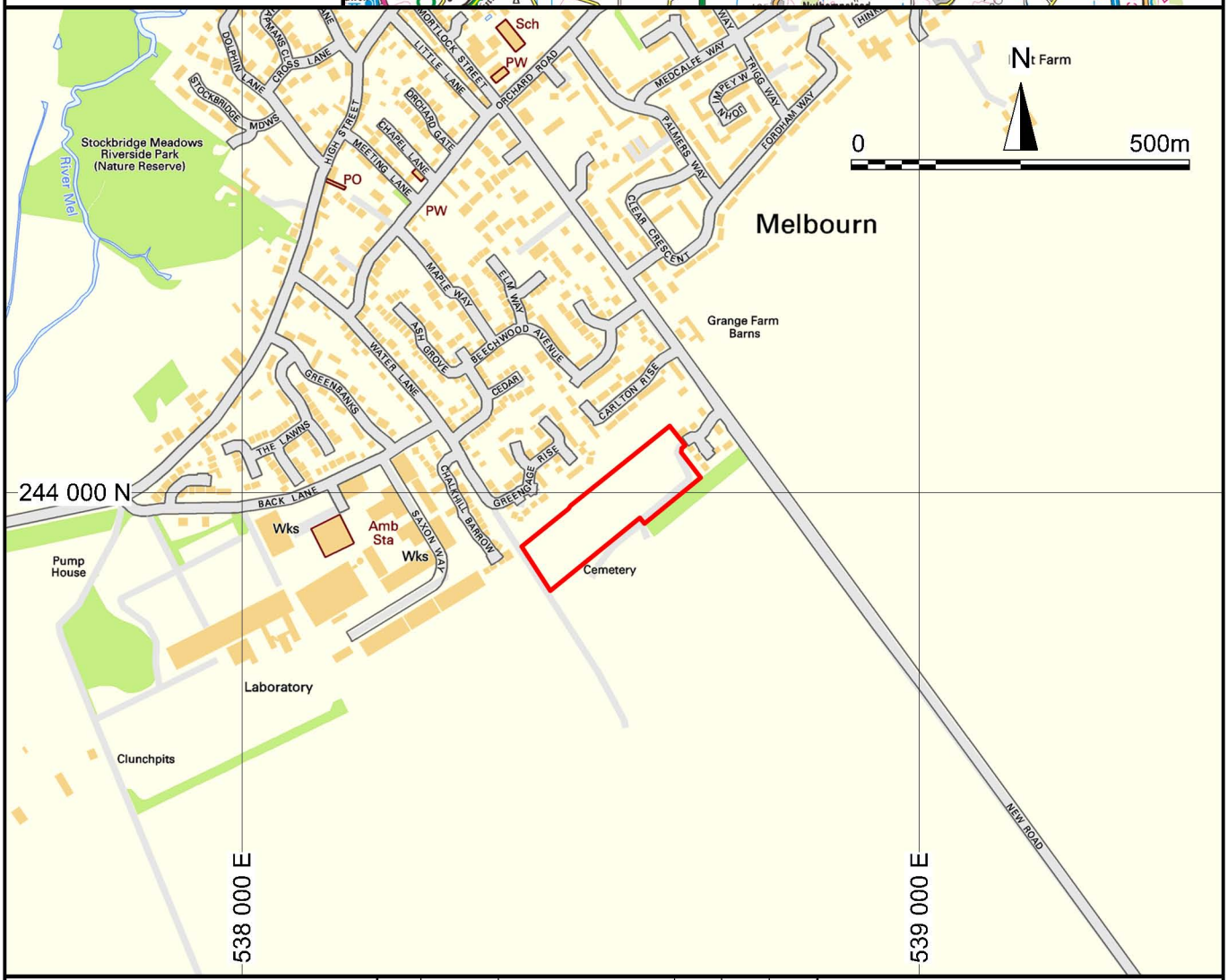
Plate 16: Trench 6, machine slot into buried soil 612 and colluvium 611, looking NNE

Plate 17: Soil sieving in progress

APPENDIX F

FIGURES





Proposed development

[Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright 2010]

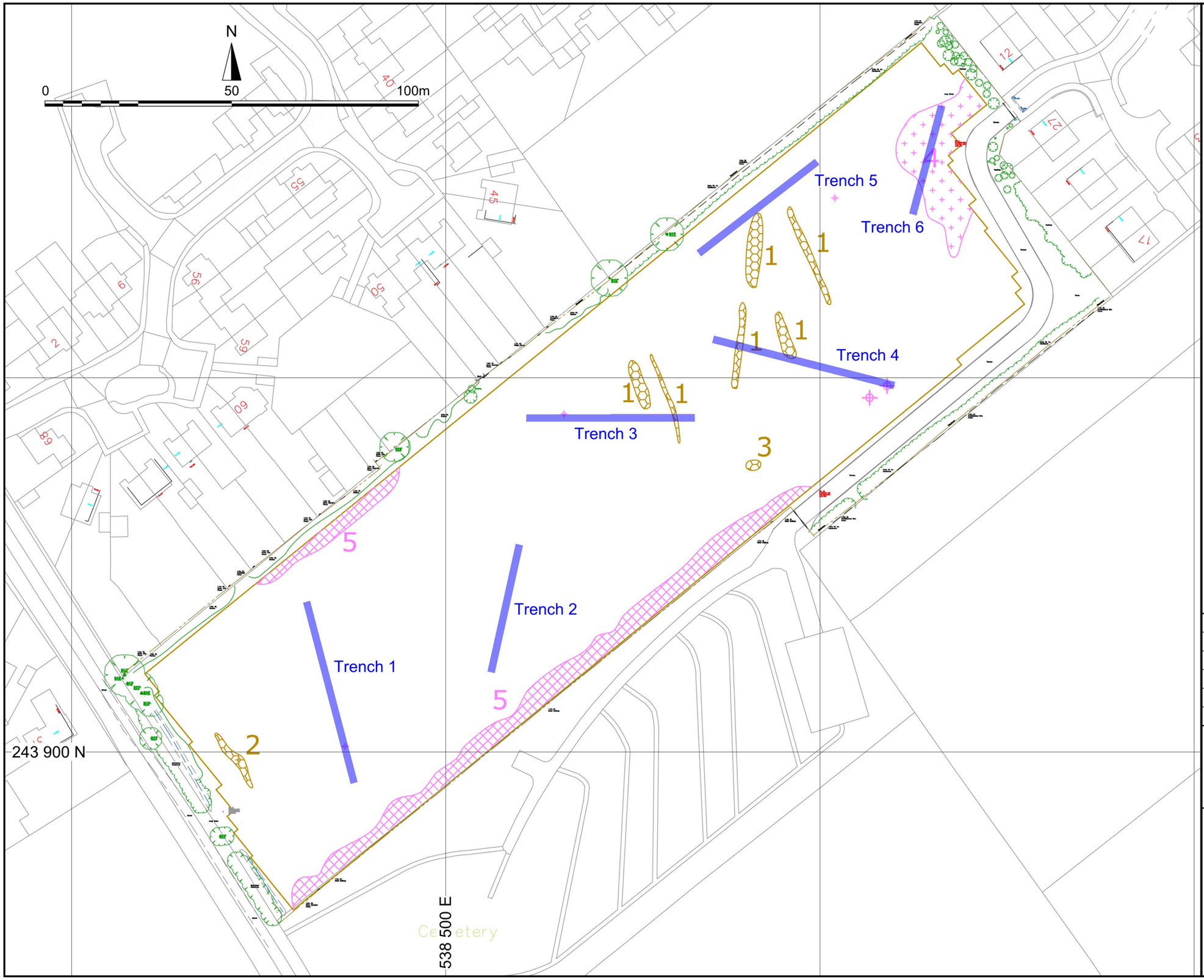
Ver	Date	Description	Drn	Chk	App
				-	
1.00	21/01/15	First issue	RM	CT	CL

network archaeology

Victoria Way, Melbourn
Cambridgeshire

Figure 1
Location of proposed development

Scale: 1:10 000



- Evaluation trench
- Area of magnetic variation, probably natural
- Scattered magnetic debris
- Magnetic spike, probably a ferrous object
- Magnetic disturbance from fence

[Based on a figure by Stratascan Ltd 2013]

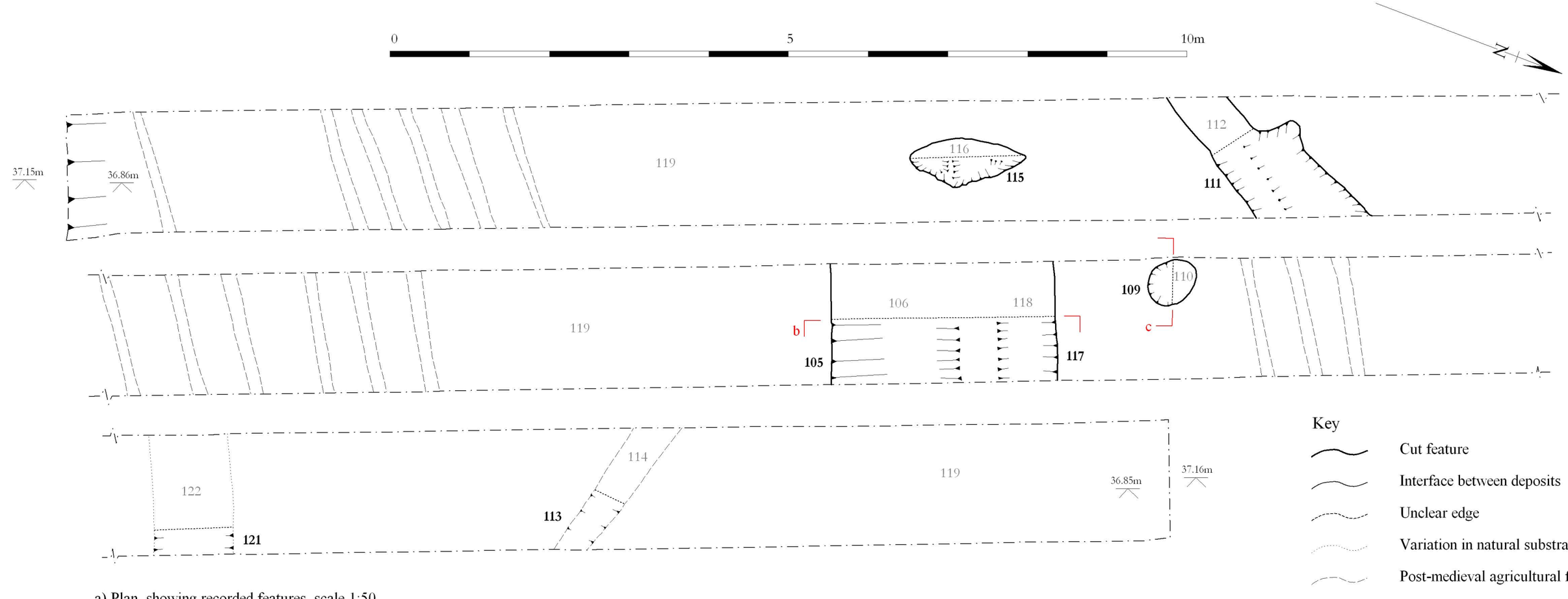
Ver	Date	Description	Drn	Chk	App
1.0	21/01/15	Issue	RM	CT	CL
0.1	07/11/14	Draft	RM	ST	

network archaeology

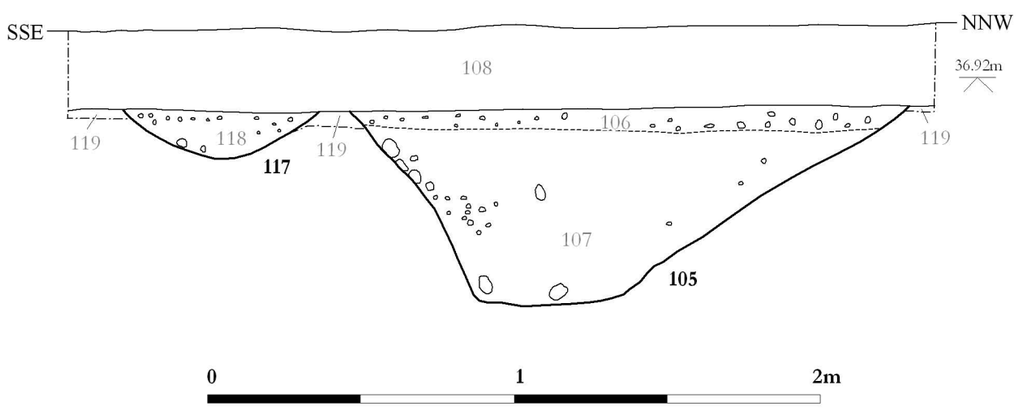
Victoria Way, Melbourn, Cambridgeshire

Figure 2
Location of evaluation trenches in relation to geophysics interpretation

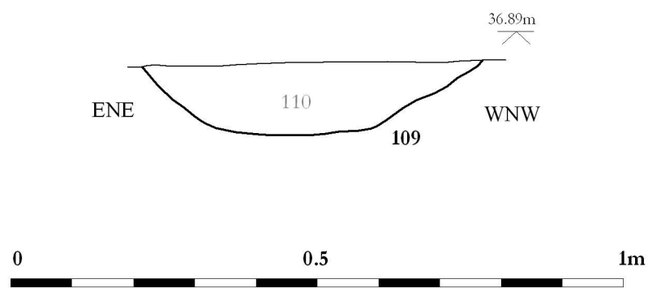
Scale: 1:1000



a) Plan, showing recorded features, scale 1:50

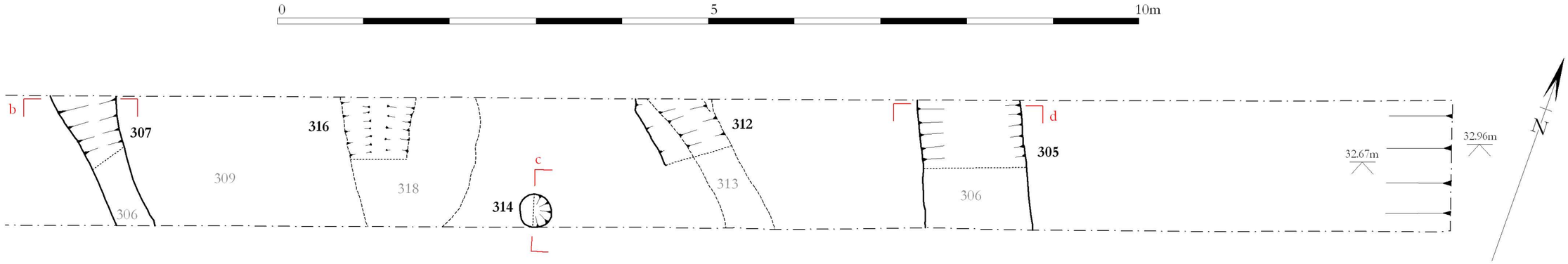


b) East-north-east-facing section, ditches 105 and 117, scale 1:20

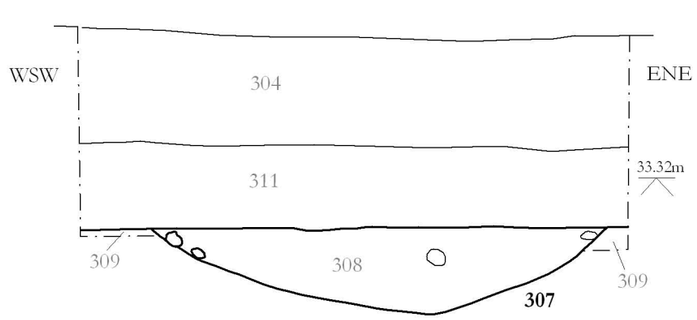


c) South-south-east-facing section, posthole 109, scale 1:10

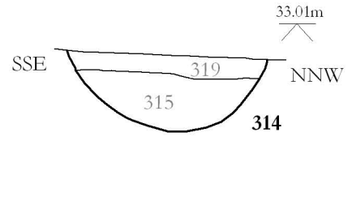
Figure 3: Trench 1, plan and sections



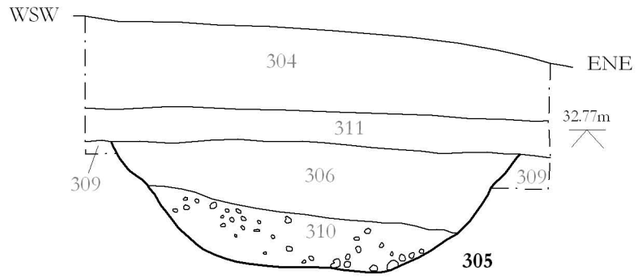
a) Plan of eastern end of trench, showing recorded features. scale 1:50



b) South-facing section, ditch 307, scale 1:10



c) East-facing section, posthole 314, scale 1:10

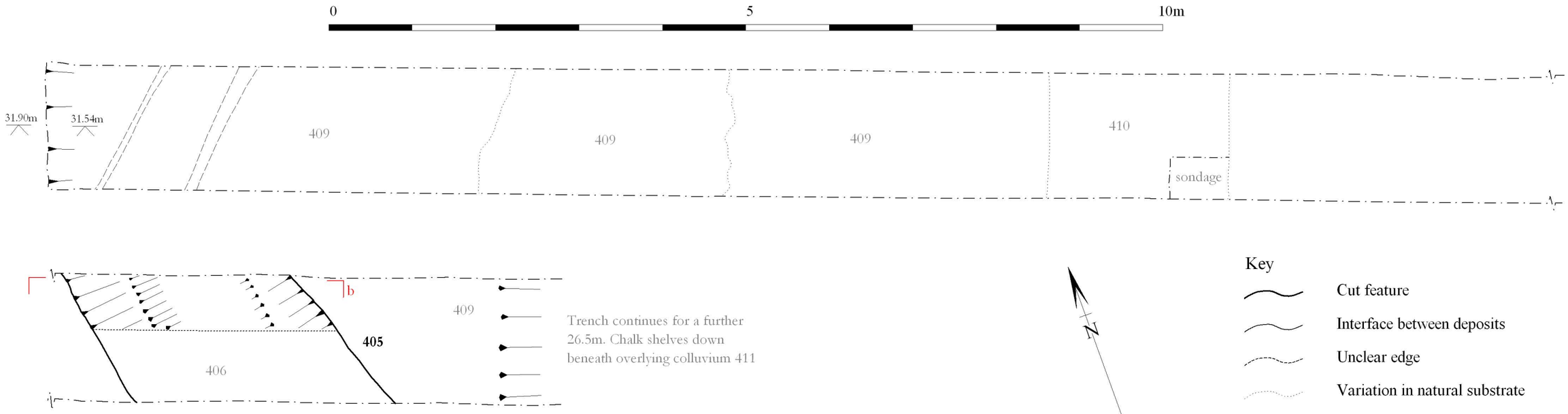


d) South-facing section, ditch 305, scale 1:20

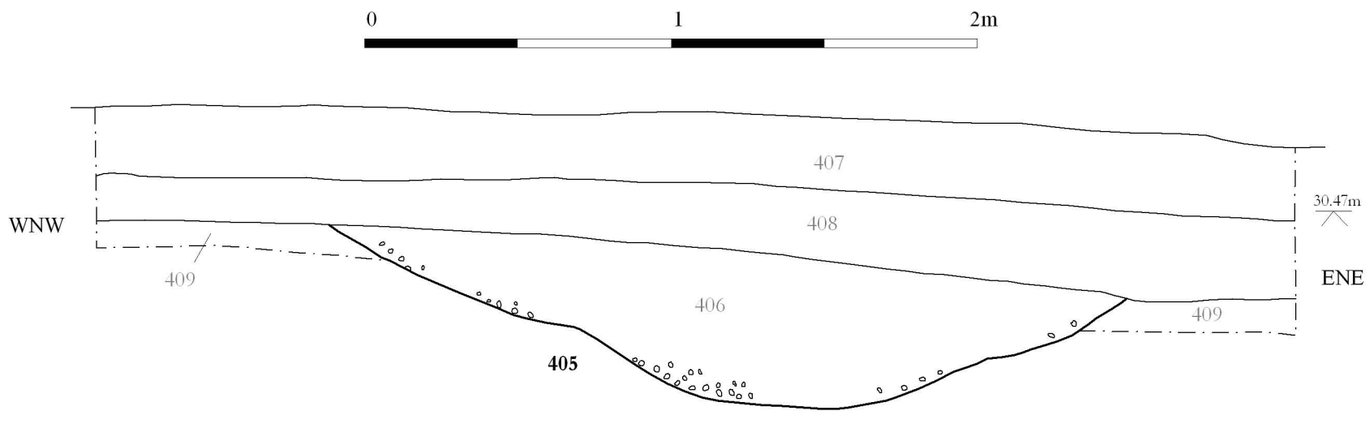
Key

- Cut feature
- Interface between deposits
- Unclear edge
- Variation in natural substrate
- Post-medieval agricultural feature
- Limit of excavation

Figure 4: Trench 3, plan and sections

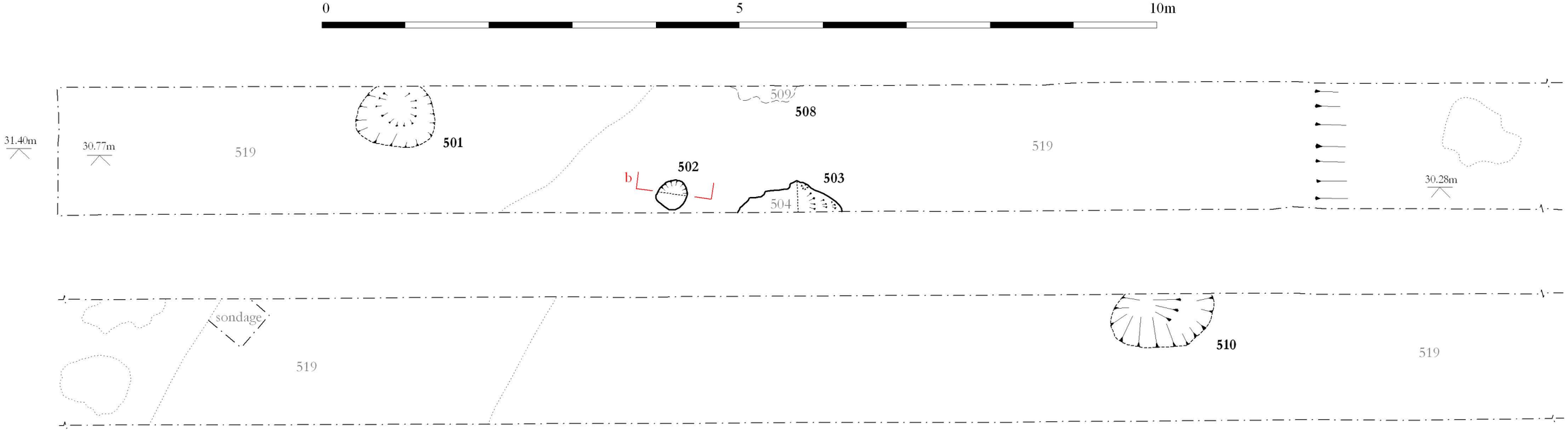


a) Western end of trench showing recorded features, scale 1:50

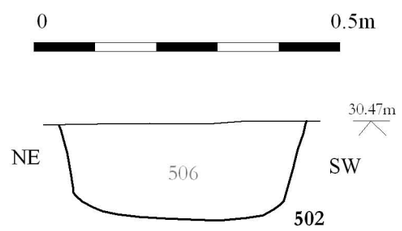


b) South-south-west-facing section, ditch 405, scale 1:20

Figure 5, Trench 4, plan and section



a) Plan of trench showing recorded features, scale 1:50



b) North-west-facing section, posthole 502, scale 1:10

Figure 6: Trench 5, plan and section